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IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Meetings

Thursday, Jan. 13 &
Thursday, Jan. 27, 2022
7 p.m.
Administration Building
1220 Howard St.
Visit kalamazoopublicschools.com/boardmeetings for more information

Dec. 20 – 31
Winter Break

Jan. 21
Grades 6 – 8
Half Day

Jan. 26
High School
Conferences

Jan. 27
Grades 6 – 8
Half Day

High School
Conferences
5 – 8 p.m.

MORE CTE INSIDE

New CTE Center
Page 6

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Spotlight on Tracy Miller
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KPS Board of Education Approves 2022 Bond Proposal

The Kalamazoo Public Schools Board of Education approved a \$197.1 million bond proposal for the May 2022 ballot.

The board unanimously approved the measure at its Dec. 2 meeting. If approved by voters, the bond would not increase the property tax rate for homeowners in Kalamazoo, said Jim English, KPS assistant superintendent of operations. Because of increased property values and the retirement of other bonds, the property tax rate would remain at 8.2 mills, English said.

The proposal was developed with input from staff and a committee of about 40 community members, who reviewed a comprehensive \$509 million list of district needs and narrowed the bond request to the \$197.1 million proposal that was approved by the board.

At the top of the committee’s list of identified projects were:

- Improving HVAC systems and cooling at the schools without or with limited air conditioning.
- Purchasing instructional technology.
- Adding secure entries to buildings without them.
- Replacing aging roofs, paving, and other necessities.
- Replacing portable classrooms by constructing permanent classroom additions.

Other projects that are in the proposal include:

- Making energy efficiency improvements including the addition of solar panels.
- Renovating and refreshing classrooms.
- Replacing the main stadium natural grass fields with artificial turf.
- Building a new El Sol Elementary School.
- Buying replacement buses.
- Purchasing new classroom furniture.

(continued on page 5)

Career & Technical Education: Helping Students Unlock Future Career Opportunities

Possibilities.

Career & Technical Education exposes students to the breadth of career possibilities in the world of work. Whether a student intends to go to college, further their training, or enter the workforce immediately after graduation, CTE can help them find their path and develop the skills necessary to succeed through hands-on, experiential learning, said Tracy Miller, interim coordinator of postsecondary pathways, instruction and student services for KPS.



From left, Allison Nower helps Theo Sherwood, while Lucy Castro works with Talia Gonzalez during pumpkin painting at the Loy Norrix Child Care Center. Nower and Castro, both juniors at Kalamazoo Central High School, participate in the KRESA Teacher Academy at Loy Norrix High School.

“Experiential learning is when students learn by doing and then are able to reflect, think, and then act on the experience. These types of experiences not only promote 21st-century skills of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, but they also frame learning in an applicable, real-world context. Learning is a process and when students are engaged in an environment of hands-on exploration and higher-level inquiry and engagement, that is when the sparks really start to fly.”

By allowing students to explore careers and earn stackable credentials, CTE students can prepare for viable careers along pathways such as:

- Arts and Communications
- Business/Management/Marketing & Technology
- Engineering, Manufacturing & Industrial Technology
- Health Sciences
- Human Services
- Natural Resources & Agriculture

CTE in Kalamazoo County operates under the auspices of the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services Agency. CTE, which some

(continued on page 4)

Kalamazoo Public Schools Is Hiring

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CTE Creates Multi-layered Opportunities for Learning, Growth

Career & Technical Education has long been an interest of mine. I served as executive director of Early College and Career Education for Chicago Public Schools. Since moving to Kalamazoo, I've continued my work promoting CTE, which is a vital part of our educational system, which emphasizes experiential learning, apprenticeships, and career exploration.

Last fall, the district secured a \$25,000 grant and more than \$1 million in in-kind support to develop Career Launch Kalamazoo, an apprenticeship program for KPS high school students in the in-demand career pathways of information technology, healthcare, and manufacturing.

In addition, I serve as co-chair of the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency's CTE Steering Committee. The committee is a group of education, business and community

leaders convened to recommend CTE courses to the KRESA Board of Education.

That group is working with KRESA, which oversees CTE in the county, and the W.E.

Upjohn Institute for Employment Research to examine workforce needs in the community. We want to ensure the community can maintain a vibrant and relevant workforce and that students are prepared for fulfilling careers. This work will lay the groundwork for course recommendations and facility design for the new CTE center being developed in Kalamazoo County.

If you are a parent or grandparent, you may be asking, "Is CTE just another name for vo-



Dr. Rita Raichoudhuri,
Superintendent,
Kalamazoo Public Schools

cational education?" In many ways, yes. But, it is also quite different from the vocational education classes one might have experienced 20 or 30 years ago. Those classes certainly emphasized the importance of hands-on learning that we know is so beneficial to many students, and they helped students move into skilled trades.

But, those programs suffered from a reputation for creating distinctions between students who would be filling "lesser" jobs and those who would be part of the "better" college-going community. It also was seen as a "track" for underperforming and sometimes students coming from low-income backgrounds or minority communities.

That is no longer the case. Jobs in CTE are no longer seen as less important but as essential to our economy. CTE helps cre-

ate a highly skilled workforce of life-long learners who not only learn hands-on skills in class and through apprenticeships but who also earn valuable credentials they can build on through high school and into their post-secondary lives.

No longer does the educational community see CTE and college as an "either/or" situation but as one where students flow from one into the other — if that's what the student desires. CTE provides high academic standards that prepare students for whatever post-secondary experience they seek and teaches them 21st century skills, such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem solving, that are essential to being successful in any workplace.

Our work also focuses on tackling issues of diversity, equity and inclusion through CTE. Workers of color and women

have historically been financially disadvantaged by a system that provided lower-quality training, which resulted in lower wages and a lack of social mobility that was detrimental to their long-term earning opportunities. We are working to ensure that all students understand their options within CTE to prepare for and access well-paying jobs with room for advancement.

The current KRESA CTE options include wonderful classes such as aviation, mechatronics, education, healthcare, robotics, welding, law enforcement and dozens of other classes. We are excited to work with our business partners to see what the greatest needs will be in the future and to help craft courses that help students discover the unique possibilities that await them.

We are excited to use CTE to unlock opportunities for our students and community.

STAY WARM THIS WINTER. CHECK YOUR FURNACE TODAY.

Checking your furnace early can save you from making an emergency service call this winter. If you find your furnace is in need of repair or replacement, **Community Homeworks** is here to help! We offer no or low-cost support to income eligible homeowners in the **City of Kalamazoo**. Call or email us today to see if you are eligible at **(269) 998-3275 ext 202** or **info@communityhomeworks.org**.

Community Homeworks provides additional critical home repair services for homeowners, such as electrical, hot water heaters, plumbing, and other health and safety issues. Visit **CommunityHomeworks.org** for more information.

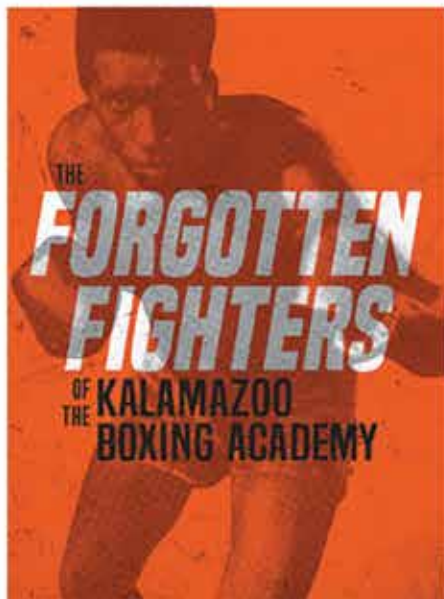


EXHIBIT OPENS FEBRUARY 5, 2022

Explore the personal stories of the boxers and trainers from the KBA—Kalamazoo's impressive yet mostly forgotten haven for sparring.



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
KALAMAZOO

NOW - FEBRUARY 22, 2022

40 years of Junior League of Kalamazoo memorabilia and history is currently on display in the museum's first floor, near the planetarium. The showcase includes the Junior League "acceptance" letter, newspaper articles, artifacts, and even an "obituary" for Festival of Trees.

FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS PLANETARIUM SHOWS

JANUARY 14 - 29, 2022

ONE WORLD, ONE SKY | 11:00 a.m. | Preschool - 1st grade

Join Big Bird, Elmo, and their Chinese friend, Hu Hu Zhu, exploring the sky they share for this 30-minute showing. Discover the Big Dipper and North Star, and take an imaginary trip to the Moon with Elmo and Hu Hu Zhu.

COSMOS ODYSSEY | 2:30 p.m. | Grades 7 and up

Our journey begins with the birth of the universe and the solar system, and it continues on to illustrate how humans have used their powers of observation, intellect and ingenuity to begin to understand their place in the cosmos.

10th ANNUAL VIRTUAL



KALAMAZOO VALLEY
MUSEUM

A CELEBRATION OF TIME

JANUARY 17, 2022

Special MLK Jr. Story



TOYS II: THE INSIDE STORY

JANUARY 22 - MAY 1, 2022

This special exhibit includes twenty play/learn stations and displays that illustrate the simple mechanisms commonly found in toys, letting visitors create their own toy-like combinations of gears, pulleys, linkages, cams and circuits. It also explores the history of toys throughout the ages, allowing visitors to reminisce and play with toys of days gone by.

This exhibition was developed by the Montshire Museum of Science and TEAMS Collaborative, with funding from the National Science Foundation.

UPDATED HOURS

TUESDAY - SATURDAY

10 - 11:30 A.M. & 1:30 - 3 P.M.

www.kalamazoomuseum.org | 269.373.7900

Kalamazoo**VALLEY**
Museum KV

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is governed by its Board of Trustees.

Career & Technical Education: Helping Students Unlock Future Career Opportunities (continued from page 1)

may remember being called vocational education, includes traditional careers such as construction trades, certified nursing assistant, business, welding and cosmetology. But today, students can also explore career possibilities in aviation technology, healthcare, public safety, culinary arts, veterinary science, robotics, information technology, mechatronics, robotics, and other programs.

In Kalamazoo County, the KRESA CTE umbrella also includes Education For the Arts and Early/Middle College, the five-year program that allows a student to simultaneously complete a high school diploma and an associate's degree or other professional certification at Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

"Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Early/Middle College (E/MC) provide students with these types of experiences through rigorous and relevant curriculum while positioning them for future career growth, development, and opportunities," said KPS Superintendent Dr. Rita Raichoudhuri. "Students participating in these programs can earn diplomas, certificates,

certifications, and credentials to build their career portfolio in several high-demand, high-skill, high-wage critical shortage career fields that employers are ready to hire and take student learning and earning to a higher level."

Two key elements for today's CTE classes are the concept of stackable credentials and internships and apprenticeships. With stackable credentials students can begin earning career certifications while still in high school — and keep building those skills and competencies so that by the time they graduate from high school, they can move directly into the world of work.

Internships and apprenticeships are considered essential experiences in the post-secondary education world.

KPS recently received a grant from the Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeships to establish Career Launch Kalamazoo, an apprenticeship program for high school students in the areas of information technology, healthcare, and manufacturing.

For Miller, each opportunity to explore a pathway through a career intervention or activities

helps students discover what they want to do with their lives as they develop the skills, dispositions, and self-awareness to succeed.

"CTE is designed to help students increase their academic, technical, and employability skills," Miller said. "The better they understand themselves, their strengths, and their skills, the better they'll be prepared to launch their careers."

The experiential nature of CTE ensures that students gain a hands-on understanding of the career pathways that interest them. That's valuable for any student, including those who see college in their future.

Miller is pleased that CTE is receiving renewed attention and that educators are re-embracing vocational training programs. For too long, skilled trades have been undervalued — despite offering stable, high-paying, in-demand careers. That's been harmful to society, the economy and workforce, students and families, and educational preparation programs, she said.

"We need to stop thinking about CTE and college as an either-or situation. It's not," Miller said.

"You can do both. You can do a career tech program and apprenticeship, pursue a job and still have time within the 10 year-period to use The Promise to gain stackable credentials, if you qualify for it. Even if you don't qualify for The

Promise, CTE will leave you better prepared to pursue your career training at a community college or a four-year institution. Our job is to provide students with information about all of the career-building avenues open to them."

ADVISORY TO ALL PARENTS

Dear Parent/Guardian:
Kalamazoo Public Schools has adopted an Integrated Pest Management program. Inherent with this are the District's efforts to reduce the use of chemical pesticide(s) as much as possible. While it may occasionally be necessary to apply a pesticide, they will only be used as a last resort.
You have the right to be informed prior to any pesticide application made to the school buildings and grounds. In certain emergencies, pesticides may be applied without prior notice, but you can be provided notice following any such application. To receive notification, please complete the following information and submit to your child's school.
Should you have any questions or concerns about pest management within your child's school, please feel free to contact Karen Jackson, Executive Supervisor/Facilities Management, at (269) 337-0400. Thank you for helping us with this matter.

To receive notification, please fill out the following form and return it to your child's school.

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION REQUEST - 2021-2022 School Year

Name of School: _____

Student's (Child's) Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Please Check One:

☐ I wish to be notified prior to scheduled pesticide treatment inside of the building.

☐ I wish to be notified prior to a scheduled pesticide treatment on the outside grounds of the school.

☐ Both of the above.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date _____

Please report change of schools or address to Karen Jackson at (269) 337-0400.



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR COLLEGE
DEADLINE: MARCH 1

Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KZCF) offers more than 60 scholarships and grants for today's students to pursue college and the future they want.

Students who plan on using **The Kalamazoo Promise** can use our scholarships for other educational expenses.

Deadline for most scholarships is **March 1** (unless otherwise noted).



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NOTICE

Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

The District will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs or services.

Inquiries by students and/or their parents/guardians should be directed to:

Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Student Services
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

All other inquiries should be directed to:

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0177

District Directory at :
www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

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SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Rita Raichoudhuri

In August, the polling firm EPIC-MRA conducted a community survey asking for response to a possible bond issue. In the survey of likely voters, 79 percent said they are likely to vote yes on a proposal that would fund “needed improvements to existing school buildings and other facilities, and replace aging facilities.”

The survey also asked community members to rank projects in terms of perceived importance. Among the needs that received the most support were:

- Technology upgrades, including new Chromebooks.
- Air conditioning installation in buildings that do not have air conditioning.
- HVAC system upgrades, replacing old and poorly functioning equipment.
- Installing solar panels in order to provide significant energy savings.
- High school renovations to older classrooms.
- Classroom upgrades including the replacement of old cabinetry, flooring and windows.

All of these community priorities have been included in the proposed projects without increasing the millage rate.

PROJECT LIST FOR MAY 2022 BOND

Planned Investments	Estimated Amounts
Technology	\$ 28,500,000
Install Secure Entries	\$ 8,490,000
Addition of Cooling and Heating & Ventilation System Upgrades	\$ 47,306,000
Construct New Classroom Additions to Replace Portable Classrooms	\$ 5,900,000
Security Improvements	\$ 1,500,000
Replace El Sol Elementary	\$ 34,000,000
Replace Buses	\$ 6,573,000
Woodward Elementary: Connect the Buildings to Improve Safety & Security	\$ 486,000
Food Service Renovations & Equipment	\$ 1,500,000
District Equipment including Fitness Equipment for KCHS and Loy Norrix	\$ 900,000
Baseball Field at Loy Norrix	\$ 2,500,000
Install One Artificial Turf Field at both KCHS & Loy Norrix	\$ 4,625,000
Pool Lockers at Loy Norrix	\$ 60,000
Fine Arts Equipment & Band/Orchestra Instruments	\$ 450,000
Plumbing & Restroom Upgrades	\$ 2,384,000
Land Purchase	\$ 1,000,000
Masonry Improvements	\$ 4,908,000
Paving Upgrades	\$ 6,090,000
Fencing & Playground Improvements	\$ 1,586,000
Electrical Upgrades, Elevators, Solar Panels, Signage	\$ 10,259,000
Roofing Replacement	\$ 7,095,000
Various Classroom Improvements	\$ 13,939,000
Classroom Furniture Replacement	\$ 6,000,000
All Other Costs	\$ 1,084,000
Total	\$ 197,135,000

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January 2022

EXCELSIOR

5

Donation Advances Kalamazoo County CTE Center

By Kalamazoo RESA

The Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency and Southwest Michigan First have secured a \$100 million gift to build a new career and technical education center in Kalamazoo County,

KRESA says it has been working with Southwest Michigan First to bring a career technical education center to life for four years.

“Many counties have career centers. Kent has a center, Ottawa does, Muskegon, Allegan. Kalamazoo has never prioritized career technical education to the extent that we are now,” said



Dave Campbell, the KRESA superintendent.

In 2019, the two organizations requested a millage for the school. It passed overwhelmingly, with 60 percent voting yes.

While the millage will support operational costs, it doesn't pay to erect a building.

With the anonymous gift of \$100 million, the CTE center is now in the design phase. The

building is set to be on a plot of land at I-94 and Sprinkle Road near Wings Event Center.

“Today's incredibly generous gift represents a transformational moment in the economy of Southwest Michigan,” Carla Sones with Southwest Michigan First said in a release.

Leaders of the organizations say there are already career technical education classes and programs available in the Kalamazoo area but the new school will provide a centralized program that will cut down on barriers for students.

“What's already offered here in Kalamazoo is a decentralized model where programs

are already located in various high schools and various community places,” Campbell said. “Unfortunately when you decentralize, it creates transportation and logistical issues that can really get in the way and become barriers for kids to participate.”

Campbell says the program will mostly serve older high school students. KRESA is planning to offer programs like industrial design and auto service. It may also develop a supply chain program.

Construction is expected to begin in early 2022. The school is set to be completed by the fall of 2024.

For more information, go to kresa.org/careercenter.

The logo for Harding's Community Rewards, featuring the word "Harding's" in a large, red, cursive font with "COMMUNITY REWARDS" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.

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The eCOUPONS logo, featuring the word "eCOUPONS" in a blue, sans-serif font with a small "e" in a circle.

Students, Families Can Learn About CTE, EFA, E/MC at Feb. 8 Open House

Students can learn how they can get a jump start on careers in fields such as robotics, construction trades, accounting, graphic design, and more at the Annual KRESA CTE Open House.

The open house returns to an in-person format this year from

5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 8, at the Air Zoo Aerospace & Science Museum, 6151 Portage Road. The event is open to students in grades 8-11 and their families.

Fifty instructors will be available to discuss free programs available through Career & Tech-

nical Education, Education For the Arts and the Early/Middle College program.

In case of a snow day, the event will be rescheduled for 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10, at the Air Zoo. If organizers decide to host the event virtually, the

event will still be held on Tuesday, Feb. 8, and will be hosted on the same virtual platform that was used last year.

For more information about CTE, EFA or E/MC visit: <https://www.kresa.org/cte> or <https://www.kresa.org/domain/420>.

The logo for WMED Health, featuring a large, gold, stylized letter "W" with a caduceus symbol integrated into it, followed by the text "WMED HEALTH" in a gold, serif font.

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A photograph of a smiling woman with long dark hair and a young girl with short dark hair, both smiling and giving a thumbs up. They are sitting together against a light blue background.

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Artists' Corner

Art teacher Jamie McKinney-Brown's third-grade students at Indian Prairie Elementary School have been exploring symmetry in nature. Using what they learned about bilateral and radial symmetry, the students created 3-D flowers by painting unique paper and using multiple folding techniques.



Kelsie Webb



Zoe McDonald



Kadyn Downey



Peyton Jackson

State VIPs Visit KPS in November, December



Gov. Gretchen Whitmer shakes hands with Elijah Dunigan at Linden Grove on Dec. 6, while Sophia Mowry and Jack Casper look on. Whitmer saw a Spanish class and learned about robotics at the school during her visit.



Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II visited KPS on Nov. 19 to see the district's Social Emotional Learning and Professional Development Center. Gilchrist participated in a roundtable discussion about the need for SEL with Superintendent Dr. Rita Raichoudhuri, KPS culture and climate coach Shannon Parlato, Spring Valley Principal Heather Misner, and Parkwood-Upjohn Elementary School kindergarten teacher Renay Williams-Whitson. He also toured the building with State Sen. Sean McCann and State Rep. Julie Rogers.

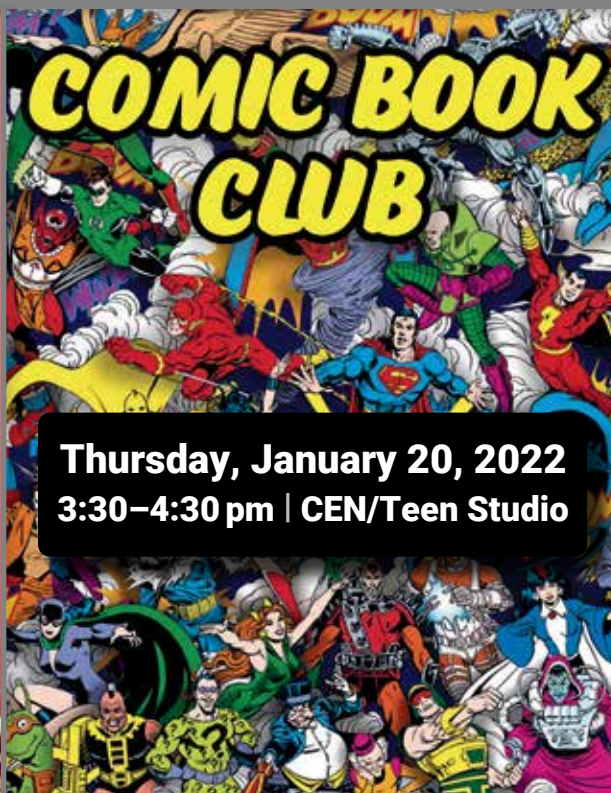
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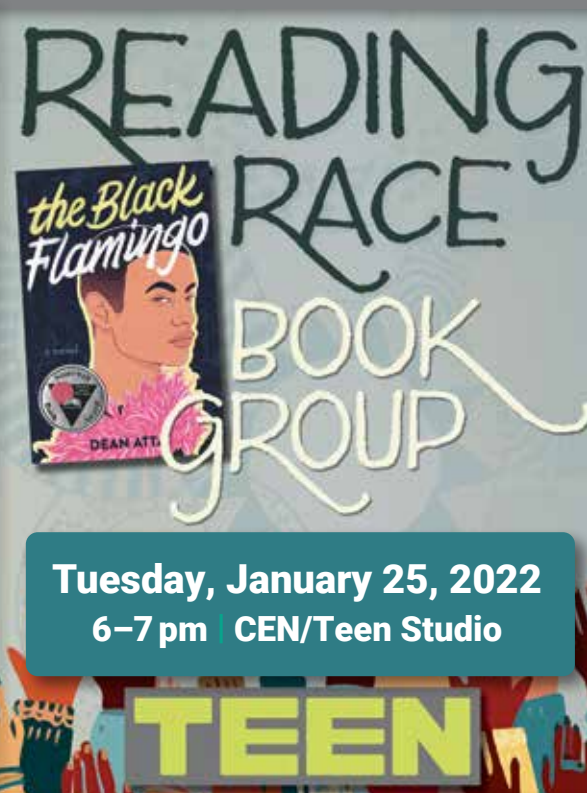
Community

Movie Night Challenge

All of January, 2022
Open Hours | All locations



Thursday, January 20, 2022
3:30-4:30 pm | CEN/Teen Studio



Tuesday, January 25, 2022
6-7 pm | CEN/Teen Studio

CEN • EAS • OSH • POW • WSQ



CEN • EAS • OSH • POW • WSQ

Higher Promise Working with Businesses to Provide Paid Internships for Students

For Flowserve's Josh Iocca, being a part of the new Higher Promise internship program makes sense — as an employer and as a member of the Kalamazoo community.

"There is untapped talent in Kalamazoo," said Iocca, plant manager for Flowserve in Kalamazoo. While the plant has tapped a number of student interns from the KRESA machining program, "we need to diversify our outreach in the community in which we live. Our office is in the Edison neighborhood. We like to service the neighborhood. We'd like to reach out to those students to represent their neighborhood."

The Kalamazoo Promise announced the Higher Promise in November. The new program aims to provide Promise scholars at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, and Kalamazoo College with paid summer internships beginning this summer. The Promise hopes to place 40 interns with 35 community partners with goals of the students working more than 22,400 hours and earning a total of \$336,000.

By mid-November, area employers had already committed to more than two dozen internships, including those at Flowserve, Stryker, Consumers Credit Union and Southwest Michigan First.

Von Washington Jr., executive director of community rela-



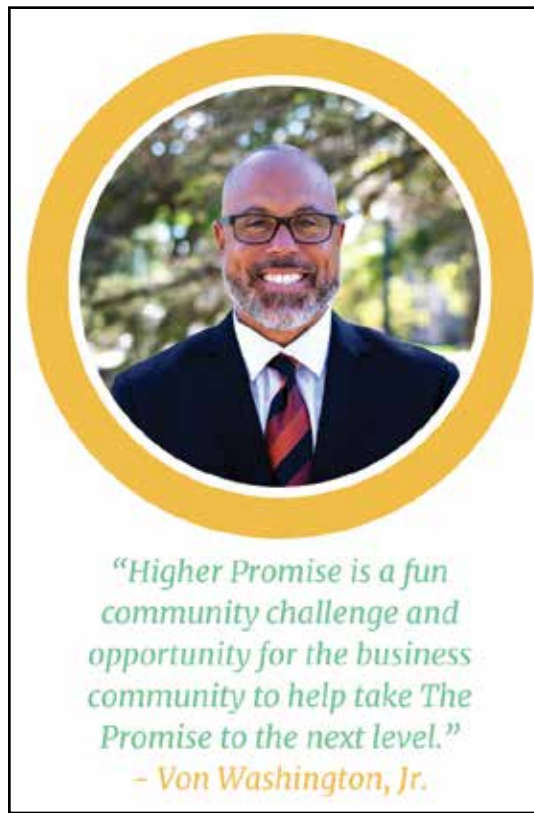
tions for The Promise, said the program was born out of an intentional effort to address the needs of students and employers.

"We were hearing from employers about the lack of talent and lack of individuals coming into the workforce, and they needed strategies to try to get students," he said. "And, some students just weren't getting access to good internships."

Washington said that as an educator, he wants to interact with students as much as possible and to find out how the program is working for them.

"But it's not fair asking how they are doing unless you're willing to provide answers and support them with what they're facing," he said.

The focus of Higher Promise is on establishing paid internships for Promise Scholars, he said. Unpaid internships can be very valuable for gaining experience, he said, but for some students, who rely on summer jobs to help pay their school bills, accepting an unpaid internship is not possible. "Some students have to make money in the summer," he said.



The Kalamazoo Promise scholarship is available to every Kalamazoo Public Schools graduate who meets residency and attendance requirements. It covers all tuition and fees at almost every university and college in Michigan.

The Promise staff is busy recruiting businesses for the Higher Promise. The ask is simple: commit to offering at least one paid internship this summer. They're looking for a variety of experiences and are willing to talk to any employer.

The scholarship program is also looking at expanding the program by trying to find funds to help small businesses participate in the internships. Washington said that the effort is focused on students attending WMU, K-College, and KVCC currently, but they hope to expand it to students at other schools in the future.

The Promise will work with employers to match them with interns. Employers are asked to

commit to attending a diversity and inclusion workshop. They are asked to release interns on Fridays for Promise-organized workforce navigation workshops on professionalism, job skills, financial planning and other skills.

Although the stated goal is for 40 internships, Washington said he'd be thrilled to have 100. And that may happen given the overwhelmingly positive response to the program so far.

Flowserve has about 380 employees in Kalamazoo, and the company employs more than 17,000 people worldwide in 55 countries. Past internships have frequently led to full-time employment within the company, which makes parts such as pumps and valves that help companies move fluids and gases. Clients include Pfizer and Exxon.

Iocca said he has very little expectation that incoming interns will have much experience or knowledge of the technical skills required to succeed at Flowserve, but he is confident that they can provide that training for students.

"Predominantly what we're looking for are people who are hungry to learn and who have the soft skills to communicate with a diverse group of people," he said. "We want people who are interested, optimistic, and just willing to learn — that's the biggest part of it."

He said internships are vital for students because they can help them "understand what their passions are and what they're interested in. That can be hard to get in school. It's nice to get out in the real world and see what opportunities there are. And I think the Higher Promise is a fantastic idea, because it will get students more interested in the opportunities that exist in their own community."



Apply for EFA Grants to Support Arts Activities

Education For the Arts is accepting applications for its grant program for students. EFA annually awards \$150,000 in Arts Education Grants to schools, teachers/artists, and students.

There are two grants available to any student in the public school systems in Kalamazoo County: the Irving S. Gilmore Student Arts Scholarships and the Irving S. Gilmore Student Artistic Equipment Program. To be eligible, a student's legal residence must be within one of the nine local districts served by Kalamazoo RESA. Current seniors are not eligible to apply.

Irving S. Gilmore Student Arts Scholarships are available to eligible K-12 Kalamazoo County students for artistic education and enrichment beyond the classroom.

Funds for the 2022-2023 school year will be awarded for private arts instruction, classes at arts institutions or summer arts camps, and other arts-related activities. All intermediate- and advanced-level applicants must also upload a work sample to be reviewed by the grant panelists.

Student Scholarship guidelines can be found at <https://www.kresa.org/cms/lib/MI01000312/Centricity/Domain/37/Student%20Scholarship%20Guidelines.pdf>

Deadline to apply is 11:59 p.m. on Jan. 27.

Irving S. Gilmore Student Artistic Equipment Program scholarships give eligible, advanced-level students from Kalamazoo County access to equipment that is either not available through rental programs or is prohibitively expensive to purchase.



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Deadline to apply is 11:59 p.m. on Feb. 24.

For more information on either program, contact Kristine DeRyder at kris.deryder@kresa.org or by phone at (269) 250-9244.

No Bake Macaroni & Cheese



Chef Samuel Dunn

Everyone loves mac and cheese, so how about mac and cheese in one less step! This simple no-bake recipe can be whipped up in no time and is sure to be a crowd pleaser. The best part is that the dish can be modified to suit your taste. Add roasted veggies, fresh herbs, protein, or add all three to use up ingredients in your fridge and prevent food waste

A few adaptations I use:

- A dash of hot sauce like Frank's Red Hot to kick up the flavor.

- Add frozen peas and canned tuna to add more protein and nutrients.

- Go for a Greek-inspired meal by adding chicken, spinach and feta cheese.

- While the mac and cheese is cooking, roast vegetables by

tossing them in olive oil and baking at 400 degrees for 10-20 minutes. Add them to the dish before serving.

- Prepare the meat of your choice separately and serve on top right before serving.

The possibilities are endless!

Ingredients

1 gallon water
12 ounces whole grain elbow macaroni
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 1/2 tsp granulated garlic
3/4 tsp ground white pepper
3/4 cup low-fat milk and 5 cups low-fat milk, separated
1 1/2 tsp dry ground mustard
12 ounce mild cheddar cheese, shredded
Topping
1 cup plain breadcrumbs
1 1/2 tsp granulated garlic
1 1/2 tsp dried parsley

Preparation

1. Heat water to a rolling

boil. Slowly add pasta. Stir constantly, until water boils again. Cook for about 8 minutes or until tender; stir occasionally. DO NOT OVERCOOK. Drain well.

2. Mix together 3/4 cup milk, flour, granulated garlic, and ground white pepper. Set aside.

3. Heat 5 cups of milk over low heat until simmering. Add the sauce base from step 2. Cook, stirring until thickened, about 10-20 minutes.

4. Add the cheddar cheese and dry mustard to the sauce and stir until the cheese is melted. Mix sauce with pasta.

5. Pour macaroni and cheese mixture into serving pans which have been lightly coated with cooking spray.

4. Mix together breadcrumbs and granulated garlic and toast in a 350°F oven until golden brown.

Combine toasted breadcrumbs with parsley flakes and sprinkle on macaroni and cheese.

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Teacher Academy: CTE Helps Grow the Next Generation of Educators

For Kalamazoo Central High School students Lucy Castro and Cooper Betke there is no downside to participating in the Teacher Academy or any Career & Technical Education class.

If you love it, then you have a head start on what you want to do for the rest of your life. If you hate it, you've learned a valuable lesson about where not to put your energy.

Betke said, "Either it's a 'Yes, I love this' or 'I know I don't want to do it.'"

"It's only beneficial," Castro said. "There's no way that it will impact you negatively."

Of course, for teacher April Rocco the goal of the academy is to make students fall in love with teaching and inspire them to go into education.

The Kalamazoo RESA Teacher Academy is offered at Loy Norrix High School, where it serves Norrix and Kalamazoo Central students. Rocco writes the curriculum for that program and academy sites in Portage and Gull Lake.

Students participate in in-person and online classes, and four days a week they spend one to two hours a day in internships in classrooms. Students choose a subject area and grade level — kindergarten through eighth grade — for their internships.



They also participate in career development and complete requirements for a child development associate's program, which is the credential necessary to work in a preschool.

All CTE programs aspire to help students earn credentials that can help them qualify for in-demand jobs upon graduation.

Rocco said the biggest challenge of the program is simply making sure that students and families are aware of the CTE options within the school district. She actively recruits students for the program, often targeting students who are involved in sports and other extracurriculars because she knows they usually have positive feelings about their school experiences.

She said the hands-on nature of career and technical education programs ensures that



Kalamazoo Central senior Cooper Betke helps Caio David paint a pumpkin at the Loy Norrix Child Care Center. Betke is a student in the Teacher Academy at Loy Norrix.

the classes are highly engaging and give students a real sense of the work in many careers.

The biggest challenge for Teacher Academy students is to not underestimate just how challenging the job can be.

"There's just a sense of, 'Oh it won't be hard for me. The kids will like me, so they'll do what I want,'" she chuckled. "Usually that is how it is when they start their internships, because the younger kids are so excited they're there, but once they've been there for a while and they become a part of the classroom like everyone else, then we start to see behaviors between the

little ones and their interns. It's like being a parent and learning how to manage kids."

Castro said that has certainly been the case for her. She chose to work with a seventh-grade class at Linden Grove Middle School.

"Seventh graders, they have an attitude," she said. "They come back and come back quickly. You have to be on your toes."

Betke is working with a kindergarten class, and for him the biggest surprise has been seeing how much the students change from the beginning of the year. While the students

may not talk back as much as seventh graders, they definitely demand your complete attention, he said.

"You need to be light on your feet and be able to adjust to situations very quickly," Betke said.

Castro and Betke both said their lives have been positively impacted by teachers. Betke pointed to teacher William Santilli, who made an extra effort to connect with Betke when he was struggling during his freshman year, telling Betke, "You are an amazing student. You can do this."

"He put in extra effort to say you have potential," Betke said.

Castro said she was moved by the work teachers did during virtual learning last year.

"They were faced with a whole new system that they were not 100 percent comfortable with," she said. "I had teachers give it their all, and teachers who broke down and were actually real with students. That is one of the most human things you can do, to truthfully say 'I'm not doing OK, but I'm doing my best.'"

Betke is a senior, who is heading to Adrian College in the fall. He hopes to major in education and follow in the steps of several aunts and uncles who are educators.

Castro is a junior and has a little more time to explore, but she is considering attending Western Michigan University to study education.

In her case, she hopes to blaze a trail so others can follow her footsteps.

"I come from a family where we've been thrown into so many difficult situations, none of us have been able to achieve like we wanted. That pushes me and makes me want to do it. And I have some Hispanic students in class, who talk to me about things they know I can relate to. It's nice that they can see someone like me doing this thing that they might be interested in. It makes me feel pretty proud."

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Post-Secondary Pathways Leader Aims to Help Students Build Skills to Surpass Dreams

Tracy Miller had many interests, but it was her high school business teacher who helped her find focus and nurtured her potential through experiential learning.

"She made sure I took every business class. My senior year, the business department nominated me for business student of the year," said Miller, who is the interim coordinator of postsecondary pathways, instruction, and student services for Kalamazoo Public Schools.

In addition to her classwork, Miller worked for three State of Michigan departments as a co-op student in her junior and senior years.

"Those experiences opened my eyes to the world of work, earning money, and learning workplace employability skills," she said. "They helped me grow up and level up, and to take accountability for my future."

Her own experience is why she is passionate about Career & Technical Education and its focus on hands-on, experiential learning. Miller advocates for creating as many opportunities as possible for students to learn interactively about who they are and to connect to the career

activities and opportunities that will help their talents flourish.

"I saw the difference CTE can make in someone's life," she said. "It certainly inspired mine."

Her own journey, she said, shows how educators and mentors can influence someone's career path. After graduating from high school in Lansing, Miller's own experience was a hybrid of college, professional and personal development, and hands-on work experience.

Miller earned two associate's degrees from Davenport University and a bachelor's in secondary education and a master's degree in career and technical education from Western Michigan University in leadership and administration. She is a current doctoral student in Workforce Education and Development and Educational Leadership, Research, and Technology at WMU, where she sometimes serves as an adjunct instructor. She also has professional and occupational teaching certifications.

In addition to her formal education, Miller has worked for KPS for 30 years. She started as a support staff person, and



Tracy Miller

moved through numerous positions, including elementary supervisor, instructional projects supervisor, special projects supervisor, educator, and technology integration specialist. For the last 16 years, she's been focused on career education and development, college and career readiness, instructional technology, and CTE.

Miller wrote the Career Education Interdisciplinary Curriculum that was used in school districts across Michigan in partnership with Michigan Department of Education and Michigan Virtual University. She is a certified Global Career Development Facilitator and has presented at numerous state conferences.

Miller said her time in KPS has been marked by amazing supervisors such as the late Judy Johnson, Hank Harper, Kelli Sweet, Yvonne Payton, Patricia Coles-Chalmers, and Dr. Terina Harvey. "I stand on the shoulders of many great leaders," she said. "They believed in me and lifted while they climbed."

Miller said the tremendous support and encouragement of her husband, Terry, and daughters, Zaria and Simone, inspired her on her journey.

As an advocate for CTE, Miller said her goal is to encourage students to explore and take

the time to identify and develop their interests and skills while still in high school. When they leave they may not have a specific career identified, but they should know themselves and their interests well enough to have an idea of what career pathways might be a good fit.

Every pathway contains hundreds of careers. Students can transfer their education, training, knowledge, and skills across numerous industries and careers within a single pathway.

"I do not want any student to graduate without a goal, without a plan for the future, without a dream," she said. "Students have to be able to envision their future with self-efficacy and see themselves successful in a career. We have to continue to provide them with the education, resources, and meaningful experiences to grow their mindsets and capacity for self-confidence while helping them achieve that career vision."

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